

## Summary

Preventive health care has a significant impact on preventing and reducing chronic disease, reducing premature mortality, improving quality of life for Michigan citizens, and strengthening the economic vitality of the state. It is imperative for the public and private sectors to unite in efforts to increase prevention to maximize impact across all sectors. The *Michigan Steps Up* ([www.michiganstepsup.org](http://www.michiganstepsup.org)) campaign, under the direction of Michigan Surgeon General Kimberlydawn Wisdom, MD, creates a mechanism for members of the health, business, religious and education communities to work together to address the key contributors to chronic disease.



### Footnotes:

- 1 *The Economic Impact of Health Care in Michigan: A Study Using IMPLAN Data and Modeling*, June 2005, The Partnership for Michigan's Health.
- 2 Health Project Web site: <http://healthproject.stanford.edu/koop>
- 3 [http://www.umich.edu/~urecord/9394/Jan17\\_94/9.htm](http://www.umich.edu/~urecord/9394/Jan17_94/9.htm)
- 4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- 5 McGinnis et al. "Actual Causes of Death in the US." JAMA 1993, Nov. 10. 270, 18, p2207-2212
- 6 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Improving the Health and Quality of Life for All People*.
- 7 "The Power of Prevention: Reducing the Health and Economic Burden of Chronic Diseases." HHS: 2003, p. 5.
- 8 MMWR, "Ten Great Public Health Achievements-US, 1900-1999." April 2, 1999. 48(12);241-243.



MICHIGAN HEALTH & HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

*Health Foundation*

6215 W. St. Joseph Hwy. • Lansing, Michigan 48917  
[www.mha.org](http://www.mha.org)

# An ounce of prevention...



## Why investing in prevention pays.

The Michigan Department of Community Health, state health leaders and more than 100 of the state's health care stakeholders agree that preventive health care is essential to the well-being of our citizens and our economic stability. Preventive health care reduces morbidity and premature mortality; reduces expenditures and increases revenue for the public and private sectors; and ultimately improves quality of life for Michigan citizens.

## Preventive health care is critical to the State economy.

- According to *The Economic Impact of Health Care in Michigan* report, “health care is critically important to the economic and business viability of Michigan.”<sup>1</sup>
- Increases in the cost of health insurance and disability coverage, as well as lost employee productivity, have a negative impact on the economic viability in Michigan.
- By focusing on prevention-based strategies, we can maintain a healthy workforce. Employer-based health promotion programs have been shown to produce a \$1.49 to \$4.91 benefit and return for employers for every dollar spent.<sup>2</sup> The State of Michigan should remain active in finding ways to encourage employers to offer disease prevention and promotion programs.
- In a study conducted of 4,000 employees of the Grand Rapids furniture manufacturer Steelcase, high-risk employees with two to four health risks (such as smoking), had 75 percent greater medical costs compared to those with zero to one health risks. Through the company’s health promotion program, 20 percent of high-risk employees improved health habits and a 50 percent reduction of average medical claims for this employee subgroup was seen.<sup>3</sup>

## Preventive health care reduces and prevents chronic disease.

- Prevention-based strategies and programs have been shown to reduce and prevent chronic disease. In fact, state programs that use prevention-based school health curricula have been shown to reduce the onset of risk factors, such as smoking, that contribute to chronic disease.<sup>4</sup>
- Health care leaders in Michigan have found unique ways to impact the causes of chronic disease. State Surgeon General Kimberlydawn Wisdom, MD, is making significant efforts to change health behaviors in Michigan residents by implementing the *Michigan Steps Up* campaign aimed at physical activity, smoking and nutrition to decrease incidence of chronic disease.

## Preventive health care reduces premature mortality and improves quality of life

- Leading causes of death in Michigan and the U.S. include preventable diseases, such as lung cancer and heart disease.
- The CDC estimates that tobacco use contributes to 400,000 deaths per year, while physical inactivity and poor diet contribute to 300,000 deaths per year.<sup>5</sup>
- Prevention-based programs can be valuable tools in decreasing chronic disease mortality by reducing associated risk factors.<sup>6</sup> For example, mammograms have been shown to increase early detection of breast cancer, resulting in decreased mortality.<sup>7</sup>
- With healthy lifestyles, not only are the risks for chronic disease and death reduced, but an individual’s quality of life is also improved. Michigan citizens will live longer, healthier lives because of prevention-based strategies.
- Since 1900, remarkable improvements in the health of Americans have been seen with the average lifespan of Americans lengthened by more than 30 years. Twenty-five of those years can be attributed to advances in public health.<sup>8</sup> An example of public health’s contribution is the changing nature of the leading causes of death from infections such as tuberculosis, to more lifestyle-related diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.